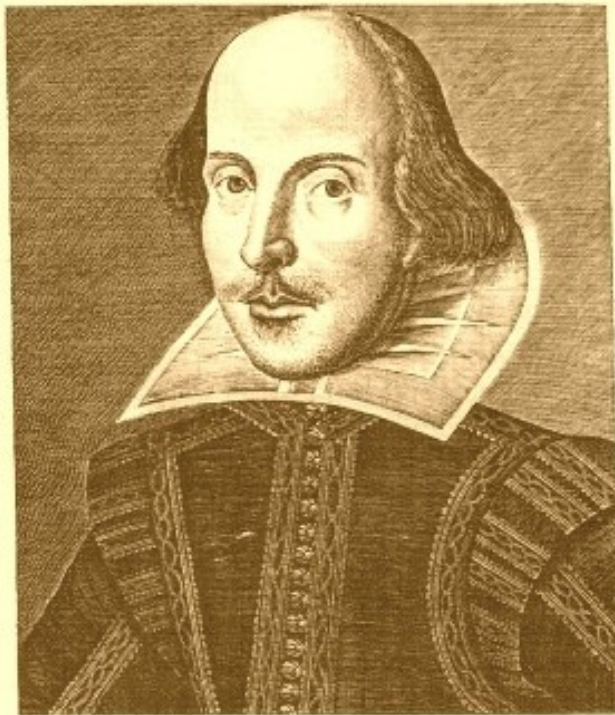


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# Shakespeare For White Trash: Henry IV, Part Two

*Classic literature translated into Modern English by Crad Kilodney*

## **October 7, 2010 – Author’s Note:**

*“Shakespeare For White Trash” is a series of condensed rewrites designed to make Shakespeare understandable and enjoyable to those who have little or no knowledge of him. The plots and characters are unchanged, but everything else has been radically restyled. Read my versions and you’ll be a Shakespeare fan forever!*

*These plays are intended to be performed, as well as read.*

## **Main Characters**

King Henry IV

Henry, Prince of Wales — heir to the throne; known familiarly as Hal or Harry

Prince John of Lancaster; Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester; Thomas, Duke of Clarence — other sons of King Henry IV

Chief Justice

Servant to the Chief Justice

Earl of Warwick, Earl of Surrey, Earl of Westmoreland, Harcourt, and Sir John Blunt — loyal to King Henry IV

Sir John Falstaff — friend of Prince Henry

Page — servant to Falstaff

Poins, Peto, and Bardolph — friends of Prince Henry and Falstaff

Pistol — Falstaff’s ensign (flag-bearer)

Archbishop of York, Mowbray, Hastings, and Earl of Northumberland — rebel leaders against King Henry IV

Lady Northumberland — wife of the Earl of Northumberland

Lady Percy — daughter-in-law of the Earl of Northumberland, and widow of Harry “Hotspur” Percy

Lord Randolph — friend of Northumberland (The name has been changed from Bardolph, since the original play has two characters named Bardolph.)

Mistress Quickly — proprietress of the Boar’s Head Tavern

Francis — a waiter

Another waiter

Doll Tearsheet — Falstaff’s favourite prostitute

Two musicians

Fang and Snare — officers

Shallow and Silence — country justices of the peace

Mouldy, Shadow, Wart, Feeble, and Bullcalf — army recruits

Davy — servant to Shallow

Travers — servant to Northumberland

Gower and Morton — messengers

Sir John Coleville — on the side of the rebels

Porter

Presenter — news anchor who appears in the Introduction. (He replaces the character Rumour in the original “Induction”.)

(Note: There are a lot of Henrys, so don’t get confused. The King is Henry IV, formerly known as Henry Bolingbroke. The heir to the throne is Prince Henry, who is also referred to as Hal or Harry. The Earl of Northumberland is Henry Percy. His dead son was also named Henry, but is referred to as Harry or “Hotspur”.)

**Gist of the story:** The events in *Henry IV, Part Two* take place from 1403 – 1413. After being defeated in the battle of Shrewsbury (see *Henry IV, Part One*), rebel leaders decide to try again to overthrow Henry IV or gain concessions from him. But once more we find Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, holding back and letting the other rebels do the fighting. This time, however, there is no battle. Prince John tricks the rebel commanders into sending their armies home. Then he arrests them. Percy is later defeated by other forces loyal to the King. In *Part Two* we see a lot more of Sir John Falstaff, an aging knight who is a shameless freeloader, drunk, and con artist. He has gotten away with a great deal of misbehaviour thanks to his close relationship with “Prince Hal”, the heir to the throne. When he learns that the King has died and Hal is the new King, he rushes to London expecting rewards from his old friend. But he finds the new King to be a changed man. Henry V has renounced his youthful

delinquent ways and broken off with the old gang he used to hang out with at the Boar's Head Tavern. He banishes all of them — Falstaff in particular — until they shape up. At the end of the play we get a broad hint from Prince John that there will soon be an invasion of France — which we will see in *Henry V*.

(Shakespeare's opening "Induction" has been replaced with a modernized Introduction. The Epilogue has been deleted altogether. Sir John Falstaff is one of the key figures in this play, and he is one of the most popular characters ever created by Shakespeare. He is hilarious and likable despite his moral defects, and we are sorry to see him banished by his old drinking buddy, Prince Hal, who is now Henry V. But it is necessary to establish Henry V as a tough, serious king, who will make history at the battle of Agincourt. The next five installments of Shakespeare For White Trash will follow the reigns of Henry V, Henry VI (in three parts), and Henry VIII. The series Shakespeare For White Trash is Shakespeare simplified and modernized by Crad Kilodney, for readers and theatre audiences alike. It is designed to make Shakespeare's plays crystal-clear and enjoyable to the millions of people who have little or no knowledge of them. Read my versions and you will say, "I love Shakespeare!")

**Introduction.** *Curtain up on a news anchorman (the Presenter) sitting at a desk facing the audience. There is a big logo that says "WLIE".*

*Presenter:* Good evening. I'm Roger Rumour, and this is We-Lie news for northern England. Here are our top stories. Unconfirmed reports from Shrewsbury say that the forces of the rebels have defeated the forces of King Henry. Scottish rebel leader Lord Douglas has seriously wounded King Henry himself. And Harry Percy, known to us all as Hotspur, has killed the King's son, Prince Henry.—Meanwhile, in Scotland, the Loch Ness monster was seen by hundreds of people as it attacked a tour boat and ate its passengers.—In Ireland, the rising price of gold has been blamed on market manipulation by leprechauns.—And in football, Chelsea was defeated seven-nil by West Ham United.—More on these stories and others after this word from our sponsors.

*(Curtain down)*

**Act 1, Scene 1.** *Before Northumberland's castle at Warkworth. Lord Randolph comes in and knocks at the door. The Porter opens it.*

*Porter:* Yes?

*Randolph:* Is the earl at home?

*Porter:* Who are you, sir?

*Randolph:* Lord Randolph.

*Porter:* The earl is in the orchard, sir.

*Randolph:* Oh—he's coming now.

*(The Earl of Northumberland comes in. He is leaning on a crutch and has a bandage on his head. The Porter leaves.)*

*Northumberland:* Randolph, what's the news from Shrewsbury?

*Randolph:* Good news, my lord. We've beaten them. The King is wounded and probably won't live. Prince Henry is dead. And the King's other commanders have fled.

*Northumberland:* Are you sure? Did you see it yourself?

*Randolph:* No, I heard it second-hand. But the man who told me was reliable.

*Northumberland:* Wait—Here comes my man Travers. I sent him for news.

*Randolph:* He doesn't know any more than I do.

*(Travers comes in.)*

*Northumberland:* Travers, what did you find out?

*Travers:* We lost.

*Randolph:* What!

*Travers:* It went badly at Shrewsbury. We got beaten.—And your son—is dead.

*Northumberland (To Randolph):* You said we won.

*Randolph:* Yes. We did win.—Travers, whoever told you we lost is full of shit.—Oh, this looks like a messenger. Now we'll know.

*Northumberland:* I know this man. It's Morton.

*(Morton comes in, looking frightened and exhausted.)*

*Northumberland:* Morton, what happened at Shrewsbury?

*Morton (Out of breath):* My lord—

*Northumberland:* What's the matter, man? You look terrible. What happened?

*Morton:* My lord—Douglas is alive. And as far as I know, your brother Worcester is alive.—But young Harry—

*(Morton is unable to speak. Northumberland shakes him.)*

*Northumberland:* You must tell me.

*Morton:* I'm so sorry, my lord. Young Harry is dead. He was killed by Prince Henry. After that, morale broke down completely. Our men panicked and ran. Even Douglas ran. He was captured. And so was your brother. And now the King is sending forces after you. Prince John and Westmoreland are coming.

*(Northumberland tosses his crutch aside and throws away his bandage.)*

*Northumberland:* I'm through being sick! I'm well enough to kill! Let the King send whoever he wants! I'll murder them! I'll be the greatest murderer who ever lived! We'll all be murderers! We'll cut their throats and spill their blood until—

*(Randolph grabs him by the arm.)*

*Randolph:* Calm yourself, my lord.

*Morton:* My lord, we don't want you to get sicker. We need you to be well. We still have friends who are counting on you.

*Randolph:* We all knew the risks. You and your brother and your son most of all. You set things in motion. You wanted a rebellion. The odds were against us.

*Northumberland:* Yes. You're right.

*Randolph:* We still have strong forces left. We can reorganize. This war isn't over.

*Morton:* The Archbishop of York has a large army available. He can turn this whole thing into a religious cause. People will follow him. He can remind everyone about King Richard and how he was murdered. *[Author's note: Richard II was murdered after being overthrown by Henry IV.]*

*Randolph:* Yes. The Archbishop has tremendous influence. He can lead the rebellion. If we all put our heads together and reorganize, we can still get rid of King Henry.

*Northumberland:* Reorganize.—Yes.—We'll have to write to people. We'll have to rebuild our forces.—All right. Let's go inside. We have a lot of planning to do.

*(They leave.)*

**Act 1, Scene 2.** *A London street. Sir John Falstaff comes in with his Page, who carries Falstaff's sword and small shield. The Page is short and very young.*

*Falstaff:* Hey, shorty, what did the doctor say about my urine?

*Page:* He said that the urine was healthier than the patient.

*Falstaff:* Well, I'm so glad the doctor finds me a source of amusement. It gives me a sense of purpose in life that so many people like to make fun of me.—I'm sure Prince Hal assigned you to be my page as a joke—a little piglet serving the fat pig. Ha, ha. He thinks he has a sense of humour, but he can't even grow a beard. How does he expect to get his face on a coin if he can't grow a beard? Would you accept a coin with a king's face that didn't have a beard?

*Page:* I think I would, sir.

*Falstaff:* Never mind. What did the tailor say about my cape and trousers?

*Page:* He said cash up front. No credit.

*Falstaff:* Oh, fuck him. He's a jerk, like all these other shopkeepers. What's this country coming to when a knight—a knight!—can't have credit for a goddamn pair of pants?—Where's Bardolph?

*Page:* He went to Smithfield to buy you a horse.

*Falstaff:* Oh, well, that's suitable, isn't it? I found him at a junkyard, and he buys me a cheap horse at Smithfield. Now all I need is a wife from a whorehouse.

*(The Chief Justice comes in with his Servant.)*

*Page:* Sir, it's that Chief Justice who put the Prince in jail for slapping him.

*Falstaff:* Pretend you don't see him.

*Chief Justice (To his Servant):* Who is that guy?

*Servant:* Sir John Falstaff.

*Chief Justice:* Falstaff! Wasn't he implicated in that robbery some time ago? *[Author's note: In Henry IV, Part One Falstaff and three friends robbed some travelers on a road but were then robbed by Prince Henry and Ned Pains in disguise as a practical joke.]*

*Servant:* Yes. But he fought in the battle at Shrewsbury, and he's supposed to be taking some soldiers to York to help Prince John against the rebels.

*Chief Justice:* Oh, really. Well, tell him I want to speak to him.

*Servant:* Sir John Falstaff!

*Falstaff (To the Page):* Tell him I'm deaf.

*Page (To the Servant):* You have to speak louder. He can't hear you.

*Chief Justice (To the Servant):* Go tap him on the shoulder.

*(The Servant taps Falstaff on the shoulder.)*

*Servant:* Sir John!

*Falstaff:* What do you want—money? I don't give money to panhandlers. Get a job.

*Servant:* No, no. You're making a mistake, sir.

*Falstaff:* I'd be making a mistake if I gave you anything. Now get lost.

*Servant:* Sir, the Lord Chief Justice wants to speak to you.

*Chief Justice:* Sir John! A word with you, if you please.

*Falstaff (With exaggerated warmth):* Oh, my Lord Chief Justice! How wonderful to see you, sir! I heard you were sick. Are you sure you're well enough to be out of bed?

*Chief Justice:* I'm not sick. Now listen. You were supposed to come and see me, and you never did. Instead, you went straight off to Shrewsbury.

*Falstaff:* Yes, yes. Couldn't be helped. By the way, I hear the King's been sick.

*Chief Justice:* Never mind that.

*Falstaff:* A kind of paralysis, I hear.

*Chief Justice:* I wouldn't know.

*Falstaff:* Of course, paralysis is caused by lethargy of the blood.

*Chief Justice:* What?

*Falstaff:* Yes, yes. You can read about it in the old Greek medical books. It all starts with too much reading, too much thinking—

*Chief Justice:* I never heard of such a thing.

*Falstaff:* And that causes depression, which in turn leads to deafness.

*Chief Justice:* Well, if anyone's deaf, it's you. You don't hear a word I say.

*Falstaff:* Oh, I hear you, sir. I'm just not paying attention. There's a difference.

*Chief Justice:* In that case, perhaps you'd pay attention if I arrested you and put you in the stocks. How'd you like that?

*Falstaff:* Oh, sure, lock me up, why don't you? Listen, I may not be a knight of the Round Table, but I'm still a knight—and I'll sit at any table of any shape as long as there's food and wine on it.

*Chief Justice:* Now you listen, Sir John. There were very serious accusations against you, and that's why I sent for you.

*Falstaff:* But if I'd come to see you, I might not have been able to fight at Shrewsbury, and then the rebels might have won, and then who knows where you'd be now.

*Chief Justice:* Sir John, I have to tell you that your bad reputation is very great.

*Falstaff:* As long as it's great, that's all that matters.

*Chief Justice:* You're damned lucky, you know. That little bit of service you did at Shrewsbury sort of smoothed over the robbery thing. Otherwise you'd be in big trouble. As it is, you've embarrassed your friend the Prince.

*Falstaff:* I embarrassed him? Hey, you don't know the real story about that robbery.

*Chief Justice:* I'd rather not know. Whatever happened, it was an embarrassment to both the Prince and the King, and now the King won't let the Prince associate with you any more.

*Falstaff:* Don't pretend to care about the Prince. He slapped you when you got into an argument with him about the robbery, and you put him in jail.

*Chief Justice:* Just for a day.



*Falstaff:* That was very liberal of you. And I reprimanded him for slapping you, and he said he was sorry—

*Chief Justice:* Good.

*Falstaff (Aside to the audience):* Sorry he didn't hit you harder.

*Chief Justice:* So, I understand that you're going to join Prince John to fight against Northumberland and the Archbishop.

*Falstaff:* Yes. They can't do without me. Whenever there's danger, they send for Sir John Falstaff. I just hope we don't have to fight in hot weather. I'd get all sweaty, and I'm only taking two shirts.

*Chief Justice:* Well, I hope it will be cool, then. Anyway, God protect you and bring you success.

*Falstaff:* Thank you.—So, we're on good terms now, are we?

*Chief Justice:* Oh—yes, I suppose.

*Falstaff:* Fine. How about lending me a thousand?

*Chief Justice:* What?

*Falstaff:* Lend me a thousand pounds. For supplies.

*Chief Justice:* You must think I'm a sucker. I'd never see that money again. *(He begins to leave but pauses.)* Give my regards to my cousin the Earl of Westmoreland.

*(The Chief Justice leaves with his Servant.)*

*Falstaff:* I would—for a thousand quid. *(To the Page)* Boy!

*Page:* Yes, sir?

*Falstaff:* How much do I have in my purse?

*Page:* Exactly thirty cents, sir.

*Falstaff:* Huh.—Well, I have some letters for you to deliver. *(Hands him the letters)* This one's for Prince John.—This one's for Prince Hal.—This one's for Westmoreland.—And this one's for Madame Ursula—*(Aside to the audience)* whom I've been promising to marry every week for the past ten years, and maybe I can squeeze a few more quid out of her.

*(The Page leaves.)*

*Falstaff:* What I really need is a disability pension. Go up and do a bit of fighting and come home with a sore toe—something like that. *(Taps his head)* I'll think of something.

*(He leaves.)*

**Act 1, Scene 3.** *In the house of the Archbishop of York. The Archbishop comes in with Lords Mowbray, Hastings, and Randolph.*

*Archbishop:* I know you guys are sympathetic to the cause. But I want your honest opinion about whether we have a chance to beat the King.—Mowbray, what do you think?

*Mowbray:* I'm not sure we have enough men.

*Archbishop:* Hastings?

*Hastings:* We know we've got twenty-five thousand to begin with. That's even without Northumberland. He's got a lot of forces, and he's angry about the death of his son, so he'll be in this fight for sure.

*Randolph:* I know he wants to be in it—but remember what happened at Shrewsbury. He and his army didn't show up.

*Archbishop:* He was sick, if you remember.

*Randolph:* Yes, he was sick. Nobody expected that. And his son decided to lead the attack anyway, and they lost. So my point is, let's say hypothetically we had to go without Northumberland. Could we still win?

*Archbishop:* You have a point, Randolph. We have to be rational about this.

*Randolph:* Young Harry Percy wasn't rational. He was so carried away with his own visions of victory and his own warrior spirit that he ignored the fact that he was outnumbered.

*Hastings:* It was a calculated risk. It's easy to look at it in hindsight and criticize Hotspur, but I don't blame him.

*Randolph:* But it wasn't a calculated risk. It was totally uncalculated. He just assumed his father's forces would show up at some point, and they didn't. We don't want to make the same mistake. We don't want to start this business and then find out too late that we can't finish it.

*Hastings:* Okay, granted. But there's always uncertainty. In my opinion, we can win even without Northumberland's help.

*Randolph:* What, are you saying the King doesn't have more than twenty-five thousand men? He does have more.

*Hastings:* But not against us. His forces are divided in three parts. He has to send one third of his army to Wales to fight Glendower, and another third has to face the French. What's left is going to fight us.—Frankly, I don't know how he can afford it. Everybody's got to be paid.

*Archbishop:* Well, I don't see him diverting forces from his other campaigns to concentrate on us.

*Hastings:* No.

*Randolph:* So, who would be commanding against us?

*Hastings:* Prince John and the Earl of Westmoreland. Prince Henry is going to Wales. I don't know who's commanding against the French.

*Archbishop:* Okay, so far, so good. The next step is to get the people behind us. They're fed up with King Henry. Not that I really trust the masses. They're stupid. They blow with the wind. First they hated Richard, so they supported Henry when he came back from exile. Now that he's King, they hate him. So we have to take advantage of that.

*Mowbray:* So, then, it's agreed we're going to attack?

*Archbishop and Hastings:* Yes.

*(They leave.)*

**Act 2, Scene 1.** *Outside the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap (London). Mistress Quickly meets two officers, Fang and Snare.*

*Mistress Q:* Sergeant Fang, have you filed my complaint?

*Fang:* Yes, mam. Deputy Snare and I will arrest Sir John Falstaff for you.

*Mistress Q:* Be careful. He can be nasty. He's got a big weapon, and he knows how to use it.

*Fang:* We're not afraid. We'll subdue him by force if we have to.

*Mistress Q:* I hope so. That man is going to run me bankrupt, eating and drinking at my expense and not paying his bills. You might find him at Pie Corner. He has a weakness for tarts, if you follow my meaning. He's into me for a hundred marks, and I ask you, how much can a poor woman bear?

*(Falstaff, his Page, and Bardolph come in. [The Page has no lines in this scene but reacts suitably to off-colour remarks.] )*

*Falstaff:* What's going on here? Has somebody been murdered?

*Fang:* Sir John, you're under arrest for a complaint made by Mistress Quickly.

*Falstaff:* What! How dare you!—Bardolph, draw your sword, man!

*(Fang and Snare grab Falstaff.)*

*Fang:* You're not getting away!

*Mistress Q. (To Falstaff):* You dirty cheat! You no-good criminal! You'd kill to get out of paying your debts, wouldn't you?

*Falstaff:* You bitch! I ought to kick your ass!

*(The Chief Justice comes in with his men.)*

*Chief Justice:* What's all this, then?—Oh, it's you, Sir John. In trouble again, are you? I thought you'd be in York by now, doing your duty. *(To Fang and Snare)* Let go of him.

*(Fang and Snare let go of Falstaff.)*

*Mistress Q:* My lord, Sir John owes me money, and I've brought charges against him. I had no choice.

*Chief Justice:* And what is the gross amount?

*Mistress Q:* Well, just look at his belly and see for yourself. Why, he's eaten me out—(*Shocked reaction from the Page*)—of house and home. (*To Falstaff*) But I aim to get it back if I have to ride you all night for it.

*Falstaff:* Well, you can ride me, or I'll ride you. I like it either way.

*Chief Justice:* Sir John! Aren't you ashamed to make such bad use of this lady?

*Falstaff:* I can assure you I've made very good use of her. (*To Mistress Quickly with a show of charm*) How much do I owe you, love?

*Mistress Q:* You owe me a marriage as well as the money. You swore to marry me. It was on a Wednesday, seven weeks after Easter—remember? Prince Henry punched you for insulting the King, and I was dressing your wound. You said you'd marry me. And then you kissed me and borrowed another thirty shillings.

*Falstaff (To the Chief Justice):* Don't listen to her. She's lost her mind.

*Chief Justice:* I don't believe you, sir. Frankly, you have a reputation for being—shall we say—dishonest.

*Falstaff:* Shall we say? No, we shall not say!

*Chief Justice:* You should pay her what you owe her. And you should apologize.

*Falstaff:* For what? I've always been one hundred percent honourable in all my dealings.

*Mistress Q:* Ha!

*Falstaff:* And, furthermore, I demand to be released as I have important duties to perform for the King.

*Chief Justice:* Not so fast. You'll have to smooth things over with this lady, otherwise you're under arrest.

*Falstaff:* All right, I will. (*To Mistress Quickly, very sweetly*) Now, sweetie pie, let's talk it over.

(*Falstaff and Mistress Quickly move apart for a private conversation. At this point, Gower, a messenger, arrives with a letter for the Chief Justice.*)

*Gower:* My lord, a letter for you from the King.

*Chief Justice:* Thank you, Gower.

(*While the Chief Justice reads the letter, the conversation between Falstaff and Mistress Quickly becomes audible.*)

*Falstaff:* I swear on my honour.

*Mistress Q:* That's what you said last time.

*Falstaff:* This time I really mean it.

*Mistress Q:* I'll have to pawn everything—even the tapestries in the dining room.

*Falstaff:* Oh, nobody likes those old tapestries anyway. You can get a nice velvet matador from the flea market for a shilling. Put up a few little things like that. It's modern art. Come on, just lend me ten pounds, okay? You know I like you. And drop the charge, okay? You don't really mean it. You were just in a bad mood.

*Mistress Q:* Ten pounds is too much. Maybe I could lend you six.

*Falstaff (Feigning indifference):* Oh, never mind, then. I know another lady I can ask—Madame Ursula.

*Mistress Q:* No, no. I'll lend you the money. I'll just pawn my good clothes. But you'll come for dinner tonight, and you'll pay me back everything, right?

*Falstaff:* Do the stars come out every night?

*Bardolph:* Not when it's cloudy.

*Falstaff:* Shut up, you. *(Aside to Bardolph)* You stick with her until dinner. Keep her away from the police.

*Mistress Q:* Should I ask Doll Tearsheet to join you?

*Falstaff:* By all means!

*Mistress Q:* Fine.

*(Everyone leaves except the Chief Justice, Gower, and Falstaff.)*

*Chief Justice (To Gower):* The news could be better.

*Falstaff:* What news is that, my lord?

*Chief Justice (To Gower, ignoring Falstaff):* Where did the King make camp last night?

*Gower:* At Basingstoke, my lord.

*Falstaff:* Is everything okay, then? Eh?

*Chief Justice (To Gower, ignoring Falstaff):* With all his armies?

*Gower:* No. Fifteen hundred infantry and five hundred cavalry are going to meet Prince John.

*Falstaff:* The King's back from Wales, is he?

*Chief Justice (To Gower, ignoring Falstaff):* I'll give you a letter to take back to him. Come on.

*Falstaff:* Sir!

*Chief Justice:* What now?

*Falstaff:* Master Gower, would you like to join me for lunch?

*Gower:* No, thank you. I'm busy with the Lord Chief Justice.

*Chief Justice (To Falstaff):* What're you hanging around here for? I thought you had duties in York.

*Falstaff (To Gower, ignoring the Chief Justice):* How about dinner, then?

*Chief Justice:* Where did you learn your manners, Sir John?

*Falstaff:* Right here—from you.

*Chief Justice:* Damned fool!

*(They leave separately.)*

**Act 2, Scene 2.** *[The setting is probably on a London street, although some texts may place it indoors.] Prince Henry and Ned Poins come in.*

*Prince Henry:* I'm exhausted. I could go for a beer right now.

*Poins:* Now you sound like an ordinary guy, not a prince.

*Prince Henry:* That's because I hang around with ordinary guys like you. Sometimes I forget who I am.

*Poins:* I thought you'd be by your father's side right now, seeing as how sick he is.

*Prince Henry:* I'm thinking about him. I just don't want to show my feelings in front of my friends.

*Poins:* You mean us low-lifes—me and Falstaff and the other guys from the Boar's Head.

*Prince Henry:* Yeah, you might say that.

*Poins:* Well, we're used to regarding you as another bad boy like us, aren't we?

*Prince Henry:* True. And I think that's the way most people see me.

*Poins:* I don't worry about what anyone thinks of me. I am what I am, and people can take it or leave it. After all, I have no particular expectations of, uh—advancement.

*Prince Henry:* I guess.—Oh, here comes Bardolph and that page I assigned to Falstaff.

*(Bardolph, who is red-faced and rather drunk, comes in with the Page, who is dressed in ridiculous clothes.)*

*Prince Henry:* I swear this kid was normal when I found him. This is Falstaff's doing.

*Bardolph:* God save you, Prince!

*Prince Henry:* Drunk again, eh, Bardolph?

*Page:* He was in the alehouse when I passed by, sir. He was looking out the window, and I thought he had his head under a whore's skirt, but it was only a red window shade.

*Bardolph:* Shut up, shorty. What do you know about whores?

*Page:* Only what Master Falstaff tells me.

*Prince Henry:* He's the expert. *(To Bardolph)* How is old Jack today?

*Bardolph:* Same as usual. He sends you this letter.

*(Bardolph hands Prince Henry the letter. The Prince shows the outside of it to Poins.)*

*Prince Henry:* Check this out—"John Falstaff, Knight."

*Poins:* He loves his title, doesn't he?

*Prince Henry:* Let me read this. *(He reads aloud)* "Sir John Falstaff to Harry, Prince of Wales. Greetings."

*Poins:* Sounds like a draft notice.

*Prince Henry (Reading):* "I salute you. Don't get too chummy with Poins. He has ulterior motives—namely, to marry off his sister to you. Say your prayers if you remember, as I will be on my way to York shortly. Yours truly, Jack Falstaff to you, John to my brothers and sisters, and Sir John to the rest of Europe."

*Poins:* The fine art of letter-writing.

*Prince Henry:* So I'm supposed to marry your sister, am I?

*Poins:* I never said any such thing. Not that I would object, of course.

*Prince Henry (To Bardolph):* So where is he—still in London?

*Bardolph:* Yes. He's having dinner tonight at the Boar's Head. Mistress Quickly and Doll Tearsheet will be there, too.

*Prince Henry:* Who's Doll Tearsheet?

*Page:* Sir John says she's a distant cousin.

*Prince Henry:* Ah. Yeah. Right. We know what that means.

*(He and Poins exchange a knowing smile.)*

*Prince Henry (To Poins):* What do you say we go spy on them?

*Poins:* Sure.

*Prince Henry (To Bardolph and the Page):* Not a word to Jack, understand? I don't even want him to know I'm back in town.

*Bardolph and the Page:* Okay.

*Prince Henry (To the Page):* Here—go buy some candy. *(Gives him a coin)*—Okay, get lost, both of you.

*(Bardolph and the Page leave.)*

*Prince Henry:* A distant cousin. That's funny.

*Poins:* Doll Tearsheet. She's very aptly named, I assure you.

*Prince Henry:* We need some sort of disguise.

*Poins:* We'll be disguised as waiters. We'll serve them.

*Prince Henry:* Don't let the King find out. He'll have a heart attack.

*Poins:* He won't know. Don't worry.

*Prince Henry:* Let's go.

*(They leave.)*

**Act 2, Scene 3.** *Northumberland's castle in Warkworth. Northumberland comes in with his wife, Lady Northumberland, and his daughter-in-law, Lady Percy.*

*Northumberland:* I'm telling you, I have to go. You mustn't try to stop me.

*Lady Northumberland:* Isn't it enough that I've lost my son? Do I have to lose my husband, too?

*Northumberland:* You don't understand. This is a question of honour.

*Lady Percy:* You didn't go to Shrewsbury to help Harry, and now I'm a widow.

*Northumberland:* Don't you think I feel guilty about that—even if I was sick? That's why I have to go this time.

*Lady Percy:* Harry wouldn't want you to go. Why should you go for Mowbray and the Archbishop? Do you love them more than you loved Harry?

*Northumberland:* Don't confuse the issue. There's danger whether I go or not. But if I go now I know I have an army. If I wait indefinitely, I may not have the same forces.

*Lady Percy:* Mowbray and the Archbishop have a bigger army than Harry had at Shrewsbury. Let them do the fighting.

*Lady Northumberland:* Yes, I agree. Why should you get involved? You can go away to Scotland until it's all over.

*Northumberland:* You mean run like a coward? No, I can't do that.

*Lady Percy:* You can wait until you know they have the upper hand. Then you can join them. But don't get into it right at the start.

*Lady Northumberland:* Yes, I don't want you to go now.

*Northumberland:* I don't know—I—I should go with the Archbishop.—I really should.—I could go to Scotland and wait, I suppose.—Let me think it over.

*Lady Northumberland and Lady Percy:* Yes, yes.

*(They all leave.)*



**Act 2, Scene 4.** *The Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap. Francis and another Waiter come in.*

*Francis:* Listen, Prince Henry and Ned Poins are going to surprise Sir John at dinner tonight. They're going to be disguised as waiters. We have to fix them up with the right clothes.

*Second Waiter:* Who told you this?

*Francis:* Bardolph. Now, we have to keep it a secret, understand?

*Second Waiter:* Okay.

*Francis:* Oh, and Doll Tearsheet will be at dinner, and she likes a bit of music.

*Second Waiter:* I'll take care of it.

*(They leave. Then Mistress Quickly and Doll Tearsheet come in. Doll is a little drunk.)*

*Mistress Q:* You're a little flush in the face, my dear. I think you've had a bit too much wine.

*Doll Tearsheet:* Too much wine? Don't you know wine's good for the heart?

*Mistress Q:* Oh, well, in that case—

*(Falstaff comes in singing. [Author's note: It's an old Elvis Presley song.] )*

*Falstaff (Singing):* "Night and you, and blue Hawaii... The night is heavenly, and you are heaven to me—" Doll! How are you, love?

*Mistress Q:* She's a bit drunk.

*Falstaff:* Aw, she's a big girl. She can hold her wine—although I can hold a lot more—ha!

*Doll Tearsheet:* I heard a whole shipment of Bordeaux was lost in the Channel.

*Falstaff:* Too bad. If I'd been there, I would have saved it. I would have drunk it all before the ship sank—ha!

*(The Second Waiter comes in.)*

*Second Waiter:* Sir John, your ensign Pistol is downstairs. He wants to talk to you.

*Doll Tearsheet:* Don't let that rude man in here. I hate him.

*Mistress Q:* Yes, I don't want his type in my establishment.

*Falstaff:* But he's my ensign.

*Mistress Q:* He's a damned trouble-maker and a lout.

*Doll Tearsheet:* That he is.

*Falstaff:* Oh, don't worry. He's harmless. *(To the Second Waiter)* Tell him to come up and join the party.

*(The Second Waiter leaves.)*

*Mistress Q:* Tsk!—I wish you hadn't.

*Falstaff:* Relax.

*(Pistol, Bardolph, and the Page come in. Pistol is drunk.)*

*Pistol:* Sir John! Wassup?

*Falstaff:* Sit down. Have a drink. *(Picks up a glass.)* A toast to you!

*Pistol:* Oh! Swell!

*(Pistol picks up a glass, and they both drink.)*

*Falstaff:* Now, how about toasting the hostess?

*Pistol:* I'd rather taste the hostess—ha!

*Mistress Q:* Fat chance.

*Pistol:* How about you, Mistress Tearsheet? Shall I taste you, then?

*Doll Tearsheet:* I'll cover myself in hemlock. Then you can taste all you want.

*Pistol:* Ha!—You know, they don't call me Pistol for nothing. It's because of my—pistol! Get it? Ha, ha!

*Doll Tearsheet:* You're a boil that should be lanced.

*Pistol:* I'd rather lance you—and then you can boil if you want to—ha!

*Falstaff:* Dude, chill out.

*Pistol:* Who's she, then—a duchess? We all know where she comes from.

*Doll Tearsheet:* But nobody knows where you come from, because nobody will admit to being your parents.

*Pistol:* Oh, yeah? Well, women like you belong in hell.

*Bardolph:* Ensign Pistol—please!

*Pistol:* Aah, this world is full of bullshit. That's why we need iron.

*(He drops his sword on the table.)*

*Mistress Q:* Irene? There's nobody here by that name.

*Pistol:* Bring me some more wine. What kind of party is this? *(To Doll Tearsheet)* Are we going to have some fun later, or not?

*Doll Tearsheet:* Maybe, but not with each other.

*Falstaff:* Pistol—shut up.

*Doll Tearsheet*: Throw him out.

*Pistol*: Throw me out? *(Picks up his sword)* Who's going to throw me out?

*Falstaff*: Bardolph, throw him out.

*Bardolph*: Come on, Pistol, get out.

*Pistol*: Death before dishonour!

*Falstaff*: I can arrange that. *(He takes his sword from the Page, who has been carrying it for him, and then starts fighting with Pistol, who is too drunk to defend himself. The women scream. Pistol flees, and Falstaff chases him offstage, with Bardolph following.)*

*Doll Tearsheet*: My hero!

*Mistress Q*: He'd better not get killed. He owes me money.

*(Falstaff and Bardolph return.)*

*Falstaff*: Well, that's taken care of.

*(Doll Tearsheet hugs him and sits on his lap.)*

*Doll Tearsheet*: My brave warrior! *(She kisses him.)* Just like Alexander the Great!

*Falstaff*: I kicked his ass. He had it coming.

*Doll Tearsheet*: Oh, you make me so hot! I love you!

*(Two Musicians come in.)*

*Doll Tearsheet*: Oh, yes! Let's have some music!

*(The Musicians will play and remain in the background for the rest of the scene. The Director can make this as absurd as he wants, with the Musicians playing very badly. It doesn't matter what instruments they play. Shortly after they begin playing, Prince Henry and Poins come in, dressed as waiters and wearing false moustaches. They are carrying wine.)*

*Falstaff (Snapping his fingers at the new waiters without looking at them closely)*: More wine here!

*(Prince Henry and Poins put the wine on the table and then step back to observe.)*

*Doll Tearsheet*: Jack, you know the Prince well. What's he like?

*Falstaff*: Prince Hal? He's really a shallow young man. If he hadn't been born a royal, he'd have ended up as a dishwasher.

*Doll Tearsheet*: And what about his friend Ned Poins. He's smart, isn't he?

*Falstaff*: Smart? Ha! He has the brains of a baboon.

*Doll Tearsheet*: Then why does the Prince hang around with him?

*Falstaff:* Well, they're exactly alike, don't you see. Strong bodies and weak minds. They're both into silly games and pranks and being wild and crazy. They're like a comedy act, the two of them.

*Prince Henry (Aside to Poins):* I'm ready to clobber this guy.

*Poins (Aside to Prince Henry):* Me, too.

*Prince Henry (Aside to Poins):* I don't know what she sees in him.

*Poins (Aside to Prince Henry):* Probably some sort of father fixation.

*Doll Tearsheet:* Oh, Jack, I love you so much more than I could ever love a young man.

*Falstaff:* Ah, but will you still love me when I'm really old?

*Doll Tearsheet:* I'll be older, too, so I won't notice.

*Falstaff:* It's getting a bit late, don't you think? We want to have time to—*(He whispers in her ear, and she reacts with mock embarrassment. Then he snaps his fingers at the waiters.)*—Hey, bring us some of the expensive stuff. We're worth it.

*(Prince Henry and Poins take off their fake moustaches.)*

*Prince Henry:* Will you be leaving us a generous tip, sir?

*Falstaff:* Good God!—I didn't know the Prince had a twin!—Or Ned Poins either!

*Prince Henry:* I saw your twin in a dream. He had the body of an ox, the head of a pig, hands like a monkey, feet like a buzzard, and the long tail of a rat.

*Mistress Q:* It is the Prince!

*Falstaff:* Well, knock me over with a feather! What a mean trick to play on an old friend. Sit down and have a drink.

*Prince Henry:* What do you mean by slandering me, eh?

*Falstaff:* Who, me? Oh, no, no, no! I would never slander you.

*Prince Henry:* A dishwasher, am I?

*Poins:* The brains of a baboon? Is that what I've got?

*Falstaff:* No, no, no, no! Nothing of the sort! I only said those things so that, um—so that wicked people wouldn't love either of you.

*Prince Henry:* Which wicked people? The hostess? Mistress Tearsheet? Bardolph? Maybe your page?

*Falstaff:* Well—yes—actually. Bardolph's cursed by the devil. You can see it on his face. The boy has an evil spirit sitting on his shoulder. Doll's going to hell for—you know. And as for the hostess, she's my creditor, which gives her cruel power over me. She could be damned for that, for all I know.

*Mistress Q:* More likely I'll be damned if I ever get paid.

*Prince Henry:* Jack, you're the most corrupt bastard I've ever known.

*Falstaff:* But still lovable. Don't forget to say lovable.

*(A knock at the door is heard.)*

*Mistress Q:* Francis, see who's at the door.

*(Francis goes out and returns with Peto.)*

*Prince Henry:* Peto, wassup?

*Peto:* The King's at Westminster, twenty messengers have arrived from the north, and a dozen captains are out looking for Sir John.

*Prince Henry:* Party's over. Duty calls.—Poins, Bardolph, Peto—let's go.—Jack, don't be too long.

*(Prince Henry, Poins, Peto, and Bardolph leave. Falstaff looks wistfully at Doll Tearsheet.)*

*Falstaff:* Too bad, love. Looks like we won't have time to, uh, say goodbye properly.

*Doll Tearsheet:* Ohhh—

*(Knocking is heard offstage. Then Bardolph returns.)*

*Bardolph:* Sir John, those captains are downstairs waiting for you. You have to go to the King's court immediately.

*Falstaff (To the Page):* Pay the musicians.—Ladies, I have to go. They just can't do a thing without Sir John Falstaff.

*Doll Tearsheet (Starting to cry):* Ohhh—Jack.

*Mistress Q:* Goodbye, Jack. Good luck.

*Falstaff:* Thank you. I'll be thinking of you both.

*(Falstaff, Bardolph, and the Page leave.)*

*Mistress Q:* Twenty-nine years I've known that man. And God knows how much he owes me. Still, I've always liked him.

*Bardolph (Calling from offstage):* Mistress Tearsheet!

*Mistress Q (Calling back):* What is it?

*Bardolph (Offstage):* He wants Mistress Tearsheet!

*Mistress Q (To Doll Tearsheet):* He'll be wanting one last kiss. Hurry!

*Doll Tearsheet:* Jack!

*(She runs out as the curtain ends the scene.)*

**Act 3, Scene 1.** *The palace at Westminster. King Henry comes in alone, wearing a nightgown.*

*King:* The whole of England is sound asleep right now—every poor peasant in his filthy bed, every hand on every ship, every stable boy, every servant—even the prisoner in his cell. They all get to enjoy the comfort of sleep. Everyone except me. For all my power and wealth, I can't command sleep or buy it. Every head that wears a crown is burdened with worries.

*(The Earl of Warwick and the Earl of Surrey come in. [Sir John Blunt is deleted from this scene.] )*

*Warwick and Surrey:* Good morning, your Majesty.

*King:* Warwick—Surrey—Thank you for coming at such a late hour. Is it morning already?

*Warwick:* It's after one o'clock, sir.

*King:* Did you read my letters?

*Warwick and Surrey:* Yes, yes.

*King:* Then you understand how bad things are in England.

*Warwick:* It's a temporary situation, my lord. The rebels will be brought under control.

*King:* Isn't it strange the way things change? It's almost too strange to believe. Richard and Northumberland were once the closest of friends. Then Northumberland abandoned him to support me. And now Northumberland is my enemy—along with the Archbishop of York, and the Welsh, and my cousin Mortimer. Richard predicted Northumberland would turn against me. I hear Northumberland and the Archbishop have fifty thousand men between them.

*Surrey:* I would take that with a grain of salt, my lord. Rumour has a way of exaggerating reality. And as for the Welsh, you can forget about them. I have reliable reports that Glendower is dead.

*King:* Glendower's dead? Really?

*Surrey:* Yes.

*Warwick:* You should try to get some sleep, my lord—for the sake of your health.

*King:* I know, I know.

*Surrey:* Don't worry about the Archbishop and Northumberland. Your army will beat them, no problem.

*King:* I wish I could be as confident as you are.

*Surrey:* I'm totally confident.

*King:* All right, then. I'll trust your judgment. Thank you for coming, both of you. I'll try to get some sleep.

*Warwick:* Good night, your Majesty.

*Surrey:* Sleep well, your Majesty.

*(Warwick and Surrey leave.)*

**Act 3, Scene 2.** *In front of Justice Shallow's house in Gloucestershire. Justice Shallow and Justice Silence come in, followed at a distance by Mouldy, Shadow, Wart, Feeble, and Bullcalf, who are to be recruited.*

*Shallow:* Those were great times we had in law school. We knew where to find all the best whores. Jack Falstaff was already a hell-raiser in those days.

*Silence:* Is that Sir John Falstaff?

*Shallow:* Yes, yes, the very one. He's coming to recruit these fellows for the army.—Oh, here he comes now.

*(Falstaff comes in with Bardolph.)*

*Shallow:* Sir John Falstaff! Well, well! It's delightful to see you after all this time. You haven't aged a day.

*Falstaff:* Master Shallow! You flatter me, sir. You look fine yourself.—And this is—?

*Shallow:* My cousin Silence. He's a justice of the peace, like me.

*Silence:* Your servant, sir.

*Falstaff:* Your servant, Master Silence.—And this is my lieutenant, Bardolph. *(Bardolph bows slightly.)*—Bardolph, I went to law school with this man.

*Bardolph:* Oh. How nice.

*Shallow:* Those were the days.

*Falstaff:* The best. Now we're old men, aren't we?

*Shallow:* Older but wiser.

*Falstaff:* Quite so, quite so.—Well, then, you have some able-bodied recruits for me?

*Shallow:* I do, indeed. *(He takes out a list.)* I hope you approve of them.—Ralph Mouldy.

*(Mouldy steps forward.)*

*Falstaff:* Are you Mouldy?

*Mouldy:* Yes, sir.

*Falstaff:* Mouldy from lack of use, no doubt.

*Shallow:* Ha, ha, ha, ha!—Mouldy from lack of use!—You're so funny, Sir John!

*Falstaff:* He'll do. Mark him down.

*Mouldy*: Oh, please, sir. I can't leave me old mum. She needs help at home. Can't you pick someone else?

*Falstaff*: Never mind. I hear that excuse all the time. Duty is duty.—Who's next?

*Shallow*: Simon Shadow.

*(Shadow steps forward.)*

*Shadow*: Here, sir.

*Falstaff*: And whose son are you?

*Shadow*: My father's.

*Falstaff*: A shadow of your father, eh?

*Shallow*: Ha, ha, ha! That's a good one, Sir John.

*Falstaff*: I can always use another shadow—my own behind me and someone else's in front of me.

*Shallow*: Ha, ha ha!

*Falstaff*: Yes, he'll do. Who's next?

*Shallow*: Thomas Wart.

*(Wart steps forward. He is very ragged.)*

*Wart*: Here, sir.

*Falstaff*: Good God, man, where are you from—a concentration camp?

*Shallow*: Ha, ha, ha! That's a good one! A concentration camp!

*Falstaff*: I don't think I want this fellow. Who's next?

*Shallow*: Francis Feeble.

*(Feeble steps forward.)*

*Feeble*: Here, sir.

*Falstaff*: And what do you do?

*Feeble*: I'm a women's tailor.

*Falstaff*: Do you do ladies' underwear?

*Feeble*: Oh, yes, sir. Lots of ladies wear my underwear.

*Falstaff*: That's all right—as long as you don't wear theirs.

*Shallow*: Ha, ha, ha! Sir John, you kill me!



*Falstaff:* Well, Feeble, I can tell you're as brave as the bravest mouse that ever lived. You're in.—Who's next?

*Shallow:* Peter Bullcalf.

*(Bullcalf steps forward.)*

*Bullcalf:* Here, sir.

*Falstaff:* Now there's a fine name for a soldier—Bullcalf. I like it. You're in.

*Bullcalf:* Oh, but sir, I'm so sick.

*Falstaff:* Sick with what?

*Bullcalf:* I have a terrible cold, sir. You see, I'm the bell-ringer in the church, and it gets very cold up there at night.

*Falstaff:* A good, long march will get rid of that cold. Trust me.—Is that it?

*Shallow:* That's everyone. Why don't you come inside and have lunch?

*Falstaff:* I've no time for lunch—but I will have a drink with you for old times' sake.

*Shallow:* Ah, yes. What memories! Remember when we took those two girls into the windmill at St. George's field?

*Falstaff:* Don't remind me of that.

*Shallow:* Is Jane still alive.?

*Falstaff:* Oh, yes, she's still alive.

*Shallow:* She was hot. How does she look now?

*Falstaff:* Old. How else do you expect her to look?

*Shallow:* She had a baby even before I got my appointment at law.

*Silence:* That was fifty years ago.

*Shallow:* That long? My, my. How time flies. We got up to some real tricks, believe me, cousin.—Isn't that right, Sir John?

*Falstaff:* Yes, indeed.

*Shallow:* Indeed, indeed, indeed. We were crazy in those days. Come inside with us, Sir John.

*Falstaff:* All right.

*(Falstaff, Shallow, and Silence leave.)*

*Bullcalf:* Master Bardolph, I don't want to go. Look, here's twenty shillings for you. Get me out of it, all right?

*Bardolph:* I'll see what the captain says.

*Mouldy:* Master Bardolph, I can't leave me old mum. I'll give you forty shillings to get me excused, all right?

*Bardolph:* We'll see.

*Feeble:* I wouldn't bribe my way out. It's a man's duty to serve—even if he gets sliced into a thousand pieces and his blood is spurting everywhere and he dies in extreme agony. We all have to die sometime, after all.

*Bardolph:* That's the spirit, Feeble! Good for you! England needs more men like you. You're an example for others to follow. A true man of honour, you are.

*Feeble:* Thank you, sir.

*(Falstaff, Shallow, and Silence return.)*

*Bardolph:* Sir John, a word with you. *(He takes Falstaff aside and speaks confidentially.)* I've got sixty shillings from Mouldy and Bullcalf to excuse them.

*Falstaff (Aside to Bardolph):* Sixty! Excellent!

*Shallow:* So, which recruits are you taking, Sir John?

*Falstaff:* Um, well, now, let's see—I'm going to take Wart, Feeble, and Shadow. Mouldy and Bullcalf are excused.

*Shallow:* Really? I'm very surprised.

*Falstaff:* Mouldy's too old, and Bullcalf is too young. Now, Wart, on the other hand, is the sort of soldier I need.

*Shallow:* I thought you didn't want him.

*Falstaff:* I've reconsidered. He's got a keen eye. I can tell. Just look at those eyes. Why, he's a natural-born killer. Put a musket in his hands, and he'll be shooting down the enemy at a hundred yards. And Shadow is perfect because he's so thin he presents almost no target. It's what we call stealth. And as for Feeble, I can tell he would be brilliant at retreating. And in war, retreating is just as important as advancing.

*Shallow:* I never thought of that.

*Falstaff:* I've led soldiers in battle before, you know. I was at Shrewsbury.

*Shallow:* Ah, yes.

*Falstaff:* Bardolph, you take the recruits and find uniforms for them. And, uh, take the other two along and, uh, process them out.—You know.

*Bardolph:* Yes, Sir John.

*(Bardolph and the five recruits go out.)*

*Falstaff:* Master Shallow—Master Silence—wonderful to see you both. I have to march twelve miles tonight, so I have to go.

*Shallow:* You must come and see us on your way back.

*Falstaff:* I will. I promise.

*Shallow:* Good luck, Sir John.

*Falstaff:* Thank you.

*(Shallow and Silence leave.)*

*Falstaff:* Master Robert Shallow—the most boring, pretentious idiot I ever met. And now he’s a judge and a landowner. Well, that’s fine. I don’t mind being his friend if I can get something out of it—like money.

*(He leaves.)*

**Act 4, Scene 1.** *Gaultree Forest in Yorkshire. The Archbishop of York, Mowbray, and Hastings come in (optionally with a few soldiers).*

*Archbishop:* Where are we?

*Hastings:* Gaultree Forest, your Grace.

*Archbishop:* Have you sent out scouts?

*Hastings:* Yes.

*Archbishop:* Good. *(Pause)* I have some news concerning Northumberland. He won’t be joining us.

*Mowbray:* Why not?

*Archbishop:* He says he doesn’t have enough men. He’s gone to Scotland to recruit more.

*Mowbray:* And you believe that?

*Archbishop:* I don’t know what to believe.

*Mowbray:* He’s not coming—period. We’re on our own.

*(A Scout comes in.)*

*Hastings:* One of my scouts.—What’s happening?

*Scout:* The King’s forces are about a mile west of here. They have about thirty thousand men.

*Mowbray:* Roughly what we expected. Maybe a little more. We should still attack.

*(Westmoreland comes in.)*

*Mowbray:* It’s Lord Westmoreland.

*Westmoreland:* I come in peace from Prince John. He sends respectful greetings.

*Archbishop:* Peace to you, too, sir. What does Prince John have to say?

*Westmoreland:* Your Grace, the Prince wants to know why a man in your position—a churchman, a man of peace, a man of wisdom—would lead a rebellion against the King?

*Archbishop:* Because this country is sick, that's why. And King Henry is the reason. We tried to explain our grievances to him a long time ago, but he wouldn't hear us. So we have no choice. We don't like rebellion. We'd rather have peace, but a permanent, meaningful peace.

*Westmoreland:* When did the King ever refuse to see you? When did he ever do you any harm?

*Archbishop:* He murdered my brother for supporting King Richard.

*Westmoreland:* This is all in the past. And in any case, your personal grievance doesn't justify a general insurrection.

*Mowbray:* Doesn't our honour count for anything? After what happened at Shrewsbury, are we supposed to forget all our grievances and sit home and do nothing?

*Westmoreland:* No one can be happy who loses a war, but it's not personal. It's war. And you, in particular, have no reason to quarrel with the King. It was King Richard who exiled your father, and it was King Henry who returned your lands to you.

*Mowbray:* My father was ready to face Henry Bolingbroke in a duel when King Richard stopped it. Then he sent both of them into exile.

*Westmoreland:* Which was a lucky thing for your father because Bolingbroke would've killed him, and everyone knows it. And what's more, everyone loved Bolingbroke and hated your father. But I didn't come here to argue about history. I came here to tell you that Prince John is willing to listen to your grievances and deal with them in a reasonable way.

*Mowbray:* Oh, sure. He's willing to listen now that we have an army to stand up to him.

*Westmoreland:* Your army is no match for ours. Our soldiers are more experienced. Prince John is not afraid of you.

*Mowbray:* I'm not interested in any conference with Prince John.

*Westmoreland:* Then you're dishonourable, and so is the cause you represent.

*Hastings:* Does the Prince have full authority to settle our grievances?

*Westmoreland:* Of course.

*Archbishop:* All right. *(He takes out a paper and hands it to Westmoreland.)* Here's a list of our demands. If these demands are met and everyone here is granted a full pardon, then we'll all go home and the rebellion is over.

*Westmoreland:* I'll take this to the Prince. Will you meet him halfway between the two armies?

*Archbishop:* Yes.

*Westmoreland:* Good.

*(Westmoreland leaves.)*

*Mowbray:* I don't know about this. If we come to terms now, it may only be temporary.

*Hastings:* No, if we get what we want, it'll be okay.

*Archbishop:* The King's tired of fighting, don't you think? He'll just want to stop it once and for all if he has a chance. Besides, his relationships are so tangled, if he punishes one enemy, he creates another. Politically, the simplest thing is to make peace with us.

*Mowbray:* I hope you're right.

*(They leave in the same direction as Westmoreland. [Author's note: Not all texts have a scene break here. I am following the example of the Pelican edition and putting it in. There should be a quick segue to the next scene.] )*

**Act 4, Scene 2.** *Another part of the forest. Prince John, Westmoreland, and some Officers come in from one side, and the Archbishop, Mowbray, and Hastings come in from the other.*

*Prince John:* Hello, my Lord Archbishop—Lord Mowbray—Lord Hastings.

*Those Three:* My Lord Prince.

*Prince John:* My Lord Archbishop, it's strange to see a high churchman dressed for battle and leading a rebellion. The King is the agent of God, and you are the interpreter of God. But here you are using your position against the King.

*Archbishop:* My Lord Prince, as I explained to Lord Westmoreland, we had no choice but to take up arms. You can put an end to all the turmoil right now by settling our grievances.

*Mowbray:* Otherwise we're ready to fight.

*Hastings:* And even if we die, others will take up our cause. And if they die, still others will follow them. It'll go on generation after generation.

*Prince John:* Hastings, don't presume to see into the future.

*Westmoreland:* Your Highness, why don't you tell them what you've decided.

*Prince John:* Yes—I have no problem with these demands. I'm sorry if there have been misunderstandings. We'll settle all these matters to your satisfaction, and all our armies can go home.

*Archbishop:* I take you at your word, sir. I'm very glad indeed.

*Prince John:* Good. Then let's drink to peace.

*(One of Prince John's officers produces a bottle of wine and pours drinks.)*

*Hastings*: I'll go and tell our men they can go home.

*(Hastings leaves.)*

*Archbishop (Raising his cup)*: To you, my Lord Prince, and Lord Westmoreland.

*Westmoreland*: To you, sir.

*(They all drink.)*

*Mowbray*: Suddenly I have an upset stomach.

*Archbishop*: It's nothing. It's just the emotion of the day. First you were angry, and now you're happy.

*Mowbray*: Oh, is that it?

*(Cheering is heard offstage in the direction of the rebel army.)*

*Prince John*: Listen to them. They're happy to have peace. *(To Westmoreland)* Pass the word to our troops.

*(Westmoreland leaves.)*

*Prince John*: There, you see how simple that was? It's just as easy to have peace as it is to have war. It's entirely an act of will.

*Archbishop*: Yes, yes, my lord. You're so right.

*Prince John*: You'll stay here tonight, won't you? Everyone in the same camp.

*Archbishop*: Yes, yes. Glad to.

*(Westmoreland returns.)*

*Westmoreland (To Prince John)*: My lord, they want to hear the order from you personally before they disperse.

*Prince John*: Yes, all right. In a moment.

*(Hastings returns.)*

*Hastings*: You should have seen them! Like a bunch of happy schoolboys let out for summer vacation!

*Westmoreland*: That's fine, Lord Hastings. Excellent.—And now I arrest you, Mowbray, and the Archbishop for treason.

*Archbishop*: But you promised to meet our demands! You gave us your word!

*Prince John*: I'll meet your demands. But as for the three of you, you're going to get what you deserve—for your treason as well as for your stupidity. *(To the Officers)* Take them away and prepare them for execution.

*(They all leave, the Officers taking the rebels as prisoners.)*

**Act 4, Scene 3.** *Elsewhere in the forest. Falstaff encounters Sir John Coleville coming in from the opposite side. Falstaff has his sword out.*

*Falstaff:* You there! What's your name and rank?

*Coleville:* I'm Sir John Coleville. I'm a knight.

*Falstaff:* You're one of the rebels. And I'm taking you prisoner. Or do I have to use force?

*Coleville:* Aren't you Sir John Falstaff?

*Falstaff:* Oh, so you recognize me, eh?—Heh, heh.—Then I'm sure you know my reputation. Surrender or die!

*Coleville:* I surrender to you, sir.

*Falstaff:* Good. I'm going to hand you over to my general.

*(Prince John, Westmoreland, Blunt, and Soldiers come in.)*

*Prince John:* So you finally made it to the war, eh, Falstaff?

*Falstaff:* You know me, my lord. Always reliable.

*Prince John:* Reliable in the sense of predictable. The war's over. You missed it.

*Falstaff:* I got here as fast as I could, believe me. And fortunately I arrived just in time to capture this man, Sir John Coleville, one of the fiercest knights who ever lived. He took one look at me and gave up. He knew who I was.

*Prince John:* I'm sure he was just being polite.

*Falstaff:* No, no. It was my reputation as a fighter that caused him to lose his courage. In any case, I'm turning him over to you, and I expect to be remembered for my contribution to the war.

*Prince John:* You will, don't worry.—Blunt, take charge of this man. He's to be—you know—like the others.

*Blunt:* Right, my lord.

*(Blunt takes Coleville away.)*

*Prince John:* We have to return to the King's court. He's very ill.—Westmoreland, you go on ahead and tell him the news. We'll catch up with you.

*Westmoreland:* Very good, sir.

*Falstaff:* My lord, if you don't mind, I'd like to make a little detour to Gloucestershire. But be sure to give my love to the King—and don't forget to tell him what I did.

*Prince John:* Yes, yes. I'm sure it'll cheer him up. All right, then, we'll see you later.

*Falstaff:* Thank you, my lord. Have a nice trip.

*(Everyone leaves except Falstaff.)*

*Falstaff:* A bit of a stiff, that Prince. Too serious. Too sober. Just like his father. Give me a man who likes his sherry. And give me his sherry, too, come to think of it. Sherry's good for you. It warms the blood. And it makes the brain work better. It even makes you musical. You can't have too much sherry. Now you take Prince Hal. He can hold his sherry as well as any man. That's why he's such a brave soldier—and a wild and crazy guy. And it's a good thing he does drink because cold blood runs in his family. Get a boy drinking at a young age, and you'll never have to worry about him.

*(Bardolph comes in.)*

*Falstaff:* Bardolph, wassup?

*Bardolph:* The whole army's been dismissed. Can you believe it? The general played a trick on the rebels.

*Falstaff:* Did he really? What did he do?

*Bardolph:* He tricked them into sending their armies away.

*Falstaff:* Did he now?—Well!—He's a lot more clever than I gave him credit for.

*Bardolph:* So are we returning to London, then?

*Falstaff:* After a little detour. Say, how'd you like to pass by Gloucestershire with me on the way back? We'll visit Master Shallow and his cousin Master Silence.

*Bardolph:* Oh! A little business, I take it.

*Falstaff:* Naturally. What else?

*Bardolph:* Then I'm with you, Sir John.

*Falstaff:* He pretends to be poor, but I know better.—Come on.

*(They leave.)*

**Act 4, Scene 4.** *The King's palace at Westminster. King Henry comes in with his sons Thomas, Duke of Clarence; and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester; plus Warwick and Attendants. The King sits in a chair. He is obviously ailing.*

*King:* When the rebels are defeated, I want to go on that Crusade I keep talking about—assuming I regain my health, of course.

*Warwick:* You will, my lord.

*King:* Humphrey, where's your brother Hal?

*Gloucester:* I think he's gone hunting at Windsor.

*Clarence:* No, he's in London.



*King:* Thomas, why aren't you with him? He thinks the world of you, you know. You should be close with Hal. He needs someone to moderate his extremes. When I'm gone, it'll be you who keeps everyone on good terms.

*Clarence:* I'll take care of him. Don't worry.

*King:* If he's in London, who's he with?

*Clarence:* His old gang from Eastcheap—Poins and the other guys.

*King:* Oh, God, is he back with that bunch of low-lives? I thought he was through with them. I'm afraid to think what's going to happen when he becomes King. He'll probably get himself into trouble, and he'll get the whole country into trouble, too.

*Warwick:* I don't think so, my lord. I think he just wants to understand that segment of humanity, not follow it. When the time comes, he'll break off with them and get serious about his responsibilities.

*King:* You're more optimistic than I am, Warwick.

*(Westmoreland comes in.)*

*Westmoreland (Cheerily):* Long life to you, sir!

*King:* You're in a good mood, Westmoreland. You must have some good news.

*Westmoreland:* The best, my lord. Prince John has arrested Mowbray, Hastings, and the Archbishop.

*King:* Was it a bloody fight?

*Westmoreland:* There was no fighting at all. He conned them into dismissing their armies. He sends you this letter with all the details.

*(He hands the King the letter.)*

*King:* What a relief!—I'll read this later.

*(Harcourt comes in.)*

*Harcourt (Cheerily):* God save you, sir!

*King:* You're smiling, too, Harcourt. What's your news?

*Harcourt:* Northumberland's been defeated—he and Randolph and the Scots. They were defeated by the Sheriff of Yorkshire. I have a letter for you.

*(He hands the King the letter.)*

*King:* All this good news—and me so sick.—I should be enjoying this moment—but I just feel so—

*(The King passes out.)*

*Gloucester and Clarence:* Father!

*Warwick:* It's all right, my lords. He gets these spells occasionally. He'll be over it in a little while.

Clarence: He can't go on like this much longer. He's getting worse all the time.

Gloucester: There have been bad signs lately. People have been talking about them.

Clarence: I know what you mean—the flooding. It's just like when King Edward died, they say.

*[Author's note: He is referring to Edward III, who was their great-grandfather.]*

Warwick: Shh!—Not so loud.—He's waking up.

King: I feel so sick.—Take me into the other room. I want to lie down.

*(They all leave. Quick segue to the next scene. [Author's note: Not all texts have a scene break here, but I think it helps.] )*

**Act 4, Scene 5.** *Another room. King Henry is asleep in bed. His crown is on the pillow beside him. He is attended by Gloucester, Clarence, Warwick, and Attendants.*

Clarence: He's so pale. Look at him.

Gloucester: I don't think he'll live much longer.

Warwick: It's all right, my lords. He just needs a good rest after all the anxiety he's been through.

*(Prince Henry comes in.)*

Prince Henry: How's my father?

Gloucester: Very sick.

Prince Henry: Has he heard the good news?

Gloucester: Yes, he heard.

Warwick: Let's leave him alone for a while. Let him sleep.

Prince Henry: You guys can go. I'll stay here for a while.

*(Everyone leaves except Prince Henry. His expression is one of sadness and concern. Then he looks at the crown on the pillow. Very slowly, he reaches for it, studies it, and puts it on his head. Then he walks out. Then the King awakens.)*

King: Warwick!—Gloucester!—Clarence!

*(Warwick, Gloucester, Clarence, and Attendants return.)*

Clarence: Father, are you all right?

King: Why did you leave me alone?

Clarence: We left you with Hal. He was sitting here.

King: Where is he?

Clarence: I'm not sure.

*King:* My crown—It's gone. What happened to it?

*Warwick:* It was on your pillow when we left.

*King:* Then he took it. He can't wait for me to die.—Warwick, go and find him.

*Warwick:* I will, my lord.

*(Warwick leaves.)*

*King:* Is this my reward for all the sacrifices I've made? Is this what my life comes down to—to be pushed into the grave so he can be King?

*Clarence:* Don't get upset, father.

*Gloucester:* Give Harry a chance to explain.

*King:* This hurts me very deeply.

*(Warwick returns.)*

*Warwick:* He's in the next room—crying.

*King:* I want to speak to him.

*Warwick:* He's coming.

*(Prince Henry comes in.)*

*King:* The rest of you, leave us alone. I want to talk to Harry in private.

*(Everyone else leaves.)*

*Prince Henry:* I didn't expect you to wake up, father.

*King:* That's what you were hoping—that I wouldn't wake up.

*Prince Henry:* No, no.

*King:* The crown would've been yours soon enough. But you couldn't wait, could you? What a sorrow to inflict on me on my deathbed. I know you don't love me.

*Prince Henry:* Father—

*King:* Go dig my grave if you're so eager to be King. And once I'm buried you can undo everything I've done—all my laws, all my orders. Then you can invite all your low-life friends to the palace for a big party. Let the whole country go to rot. Then see if you enjoy ruling over a country in anarchy.

*Prince Henry (On his knees, crying):* Father—I'm sorry. *(He puts the crown back on the pillow.)* I hope you wear this crown for many years. I was only thinking of all the grief and the burdens you've had to endure because of it. And I put it on to see if I could feel those burdens. I was wondering if I was worthy to wear it—if I was brave enough to carry the burdens that you've carried. God knows what's in

my heart—and if I’m eager or happy to put this crown on, then may God see to it that I never wear it at all.

*(A pause. The King is no longer angry.)*

*King:* My son—sit close to me. This may be the last chance I ever have to talk to you.—I’ve had a troubled reign. I’m not proud of the way I came to power. Many people have resented it. You won’t have that problem. You’ll receive the crown in a proper way. But you still have to patch up with those who opposed me. And I will give you this piece of advice.—The best way to keep people’s minds off old grievances is to give them foreign wars to unite them.—If I came by this crown wrongfully, may God forgive me. And may He grant you a more peaceful reign.

*Prince Henry:* When the time comes, I’ll wear the crown as you would want me to—with honour and courage.

*(Prince John comes in. He is forcing himself to smile.)*

*Prince John:* Father, how are you feeling?

*King:* I’m happy to see you, my boy—even if it’s for the last time.

*Prince John:* No, no. I think you’re getting better.

*King:* No—I’m not.—But it’s all right.—Where’s Warwick?

*Prince John:* I’ll get him.

*(He goes out and returns immediately with Warwick, Gloucester, Clarence, and Attendants.)*

*Warwick:* My lord?

*King:* Warwick, do you remember that prophecy about Jerusalem?

*Warwick:* Jerusalem, my lord?

*King:* It was prophesied that I would die in Jerusalem. That’s why I wanted to go on a Crusade. I assumed it was God’s will.

*Warwick:* Yes, yes.

*King:* Warwick—what is this room called?

*Warwick:* It’s called—the Jerusalem Room, my lord.

*King (Smiling):* There—you see?—This is God’s will.—This is where I shall die.

*(Scene ends without an exit.)*

**Act 5, Scene 1.** *This scene is deleted.*

**Act 5, Scene 2.** *Within the palace. Warwick comes in, meeting the Chief Justice coming in from the opposite side.*

*Warwick:* My Lord Chief Justice. Where are you going?

*Chief Justice:* Nowhere—yet. How is the King?

*Warwick:* The King's troubles—are over.

*Chief Justice:* You mean he's—dead?

*Warwick:* Where he has gone, we must all someday follow.

*Chief Justice:* Too bad.—Well, with him gone, I foresee not so good prospects for myself.

*Warwick:* That may be. The new King may have a score to settle with you. Even though it was only one day in jail. Well, you know how proud he is.

*Chief Justice:* I'm expecting the worst.

*Warwick:* I wish Harry were more like his brothers—you know— calm, dignified, very proper.—Oh, I see them coming.

*(Prince John, Clarence, and Gloucester come in.)*

*Three Princes (Somberly):* Good morning, Warwick. Good morning, Chief Justice.

*Warwick and the Chief Justice:* Good morning, my lords.

*(An awkward pause.)*

*Prince John:* I guess nobody has much to say right now.

*Warwick:* There's not much to say, is there?

*Prince John:* Well, peace to the old King—for what it's worth.

*Chief Justice:* Peace to us all—I hope.

*Prince John:* You look pretty gloomy, sir. I won't ask why.

*Clarence (Trying to be humorous):* I guess you'll have to be extra nice to Sir John Falstaff from now on.

*Chief Justice:* My lords, try to understand. I'm the highest-ranking officer of the law in all of England. I have to uphold the laws. And I've always done it honourably. My conscience is clear.

*Warwick:* Perhaps the new King will understand. You can explain it to him.

*(Prince Henry comes in, now dressed as King. [From this point on, his speech prefix will be "King Henry", although his coronation has not taken place yet. He will be King Henry V.]*

*Chief Justice:* God save your Majesty!

*King Henry (Ignoring the greeting):* It feels rather strange to be wearing this robe.—Brothers, you look worried. It's all right, I assure you. We all share the same feelings. And you can have faith in me, just as I know I can count on you.

*Three Brothers:* Yes. You can.

*(A pause.)*

*King Henry:* You're looking at me rather strangely, Chief Justice. Perhaps you think I'm—unhappy with you—for some reason.

*Chief Justice:* If you are, you shouldn't be.

*King Henry:* What the hell were you thinking when you put me—the heir to the throne—in jail, even if it was just for one day? Did you think I'd forget it?

*Chief Justice:* My lord, I acted with the authority of your father. I was enforcing his laws. When you slapped me, you flouted his laws, and I did what I had to do. My lord, someday you'll have a son. How will you want him to behave? Will you want him to respect your laws or disregard them? And will you want your officers of the law to enforce your laws, or not?

*(A pause while King Henry considers.)*

*King Henry:* You're right. And I want you to serve me as faithfully as you served my father.

*Chief Justice:* I will, sir.

*King Henry:* You're a good man. Shake my hand, sir. *(They shake hands.)* I'm going to count on you to give me good counsel. You have wisdom.—And brothers, you're going to see a very different Harry from now on. Your brother is going to be a very serious King. I'm going to choose my advisors very carefully. You'll be among them. And, God willing, every citizen in England will be glad to have me as King.

*(They all leave.)*

**Act 5, Scene 3.** *In Master Shallow's house. Shallow, Silence, Falstaff, Bardolph, and the Page are seated at the dinner table. Shallow's servant Davy is attending.*

*Falstaff (Pushing back his plate):* I'm stuffed! Great dinner, Master Shallow. Do you eat like this all the time?

*Shallow:* Oh, no, no. We're really poor men. This dinner is in your honour.

*Falstaff:* I don't believe it, but thank you anyway.—This is a nice place you've got here.

*Shallow:* Thank you, Sir John.—Davy, more wine. We can't have our guests sitting with empty cups.

*(Davy goes around the table pouring more wine.)*

*Falstaff:* I think Master Silence is already quite drunk.

*Silence (Drunkenly):* I don't often get this drunk.

*Falstaff:* I do!—Ha, ha! Every damn chance I get!—Isn't that right, Bardolph?

*Bardolph:* Yes, Sir John.

*Falstaff (To the Page):* Drink up, kid. It'll put hair on your chest—ha, ha!

*Shallow:* Davy, bring some nuts.

*(Davy goes out.)*

*Falstaff:* Nuts! Aren't we all nuts already—ha!

*Silence (Drunkenly):* Ha, ha.

*Falstaff:* Do you know any dirty songs, Master Silence?

*Silence:* Ohh—I have to think.

*(Davy returns with a bowl of nuts.)*

*Shallow:* Is everyone happy?—Master Bardolph?

*Bardolph:* Oh, yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

*Shallow:* And how about the little giant?

*Page:* I'm fine, sir.

*Falstaff:* Of course, he's fine. Hanging around with me, how else would he be?—Go ahead, kid—drink.

*Silence (Trying to sing):* “Oh, I'm a drunken sailor—show me to my bed”—I forget how it goes.

*Bardolph (Trying to sing):* “Show me to my bed—And if it's not the right one”—How does it go?

*Silence (Trying to sing):* “If it's not the right one—I'll sleep in yours instead—”

*Bardolph (Trying to sing):* Right, right.—“And if I wake beside your wife”—um, if I wake beside your wife—

*Silence (Trying to sing):* “I'll nestle right beside her—”

*Bardolph (Trying to sing):* “And swear upon my main mast—”

*Silence and Bardolph (Together):* “That I never was inside her.”

*(All laugh, except the Page, who merely smiles.)*

*Falstaff (To the Page):* I'll explain it to you later.

*(A knock is heard at the door.)*

*Shallow:* Davy, see who that is.

*(Davy goes out.)*

*Falstaff:* Master Silence, I didn't know you could sing.

*Silence:* Oh, yes. I've sung three times—including tonight.

*Falstaff:* Three times! Well, there's a party animal for you!

*(Davy returns with Pistol.)*

*Falstaff:* It's my ensign, Pistol.—Pistol, what are you doing here?

*Pistol (With a big smile):* Sir John, you have just gone up in the world, and I mean big-time!

*Falstaff:* Have I?

*Pistol:* You've hit the jackpot! It's fortune! It's money! It's status!

*Falstaff:* What is it?

*Pistol:* It's fine clothes! Expensive wine! Luxuries! Women! It's never having to worry about anything ever again as long as you live!

*Shallow:* For chrissake, man, if you have good news, out with it! I'm a justice of the peace, you know. I'm the King's man.

*Pistol (With a twisted smile):* And which King would that be, sir?

*Shallow:* What?

*Pistol:* Which number?

*Shallow:* Why, King Henry the Fourth—who else?

*Pistol:* Ha! Wrong! *(He blows a Bronx cheer at Shallow.)*

*Shallow:* What do you mean?

*Pistol (To Falstaff):* Your good buddy, Prince Hal—with whom you've shared many good times—and had many drinks with—and so on and so forth—is now—

*Falstaff:* Yes?

*Pistol:* King Henry the Fifth!

*(Falstaff jumps up.)*

*Falstaff:* Oh!—Oh!—Oh!—I can't believe it!—Oh!—Bardolph, do you hear?

*Bardolph:* I'll drink to that! *(He drinks.)*

*Falstaff:* Ohhh—boy! Fortune smiles on Jack Falstaff!—Bardolph, you'll get something out of this.—And you, too, Pistol.—Master Shallow—or shall I call you Lord Shallow—ha, ha! Get your boots on! We'll go straight to London right now!

*Shallow:* My cousin can't come. He's too drunk.

*(Silence passes out, his head clunking on the table.)*

*Falstaff:* And wait till I find that Chief Justice! Then we'll see who's the boss of who!—Come on!

*(They all leave except Silence.)*



**Act 5, Scene 4.** *This scene is deleted.*

**Act 5, Scene 5.** *Before Westminster Abbey. Falstaff, Shallow, Pistol, Bardolph, and the Page come in.*

*Falstaff (To Shallow):* They just had the coronation, so he'll be coming by any minute. He'll be so glad to see me. Just wait. Oh, and I really appreciate the thousand pounds you lent me. Consider it an investment. You're going to come out way ahead. Trust me.—I only wish I had better clothes on. But that's all right. We rode all night to get here. It shows how devoted I am to him.

*Shallow:* Yes, it does.

*Falstaff:* It's the man that matters, not the clothes, right?

*Shallow:* Quite so.

*(Trumpets sound.)*

*Pistol:* That'll be him.

*(King Henry comes in with the Chief Justice and Attendants.)*

*Falstaff:* God save King Hal! My good buddy, ha, ha! Hey, you're looking awesome!

*King Henry (To the Chief Justice):* Please correct that boor.

*Chief Justice (To Falstaff):* One does not speak to the King like that.

*Falstaff (To King Henry):* Hal! It's me! Your old buddy!

*King Henry:* I'm not your old buddy any more. You're a self-indulgent fool, and I'm through with you—you and all the rest of your gang from the Boar's Head.

*Falstaff:* But, Hal—I mean, your Majesty—

*King Henry:* You and the others are henceforth banished from my presence. You are never to be within ten miles of me.

*Falstaff (Stricken):* Ohh!—

*King Henry:* Sir John, I will give you a small allowance to live on so you don't have to go back to thieving. If you mend your ways and become a proper knight and gentleman, I'll reconsider your position.

*(He nods to the Chief Justice, who follows the King out, along with the Attendants.)*

*Shallow:* Um—about that thousand pounds, Sir John.

*Falstaff:* He didn't mean what he said. It was just for show. You'll see. He'll invite me to dinner. Everything will work out as I planned.

*Shallow:* Five hundred, then. Give me back five hundred.

*Falstaff:* I can't. Listen, don't worry. We'll go and have lunch. By dinnertime everything will be back to normal.

*(The Chief Justice returns with Prince John and Officers.)*

*Chief Justice (To the Officers):* Take them all to jail for tonight.

*Falstaff:* What? No, no! My lord—

*Chief Justice:* King's orders. Save your breath.

*Pistol:* *Fucking hell.*

*Bardolph:* You said it.

*(The Officers take Falstaff and his party away.)*

*Prince John:* I thought that was very fair. Stern but fair.—You know, my brother's going to be a great King.

*Chief Justice:* And may he live a long time.

*Prince John:* Parliament has been assembled. Now it's down to business.

*Chief Justice:* Yes, yes.

*Prince John:* By the way, a little birdie told me something interesting.

*Chief Justice:* What's that, my lord?

*Prince John:* Before the year is out—we're going to invade France.

*Chief Justice:* And are you happy about that?

*Prince John:* Hell, yes. We're going to kick their butts. In fact, I think we'll make history.—Come on, sir. I'll buy you a drink.

*Chief Justice:* Thank you, my lord. That's very kind of you.

*(They leave.)*

*[Author's note: The Epilogue is deleted.]*

**END**

Posted on by Crad Kilodney, Toronto, Canada.

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